

## ENTOMOLOGICAL NEWS

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## John Clark

Notice has been received from Melbourne of the death of John [S.] Clark of Mooroolbark, Victoria, Australia, at his home on June 1, 1956. Mr. Clark was born in Glasgow, Scotland, on March 21, 1885. His interest in entomology continued from his early years in Scotland through his adult life in Australia, but it was not until 1920 that he was able to find employment near to his preferred field—as Assistant Entomologist to the Western Australian Department of Agriculture. During this period, he was the author of a series of papers on Australian forest insect pests and also began to publish basic articles on ants. In 1926, he became Entomologist to the National Museum of Victoria at Melbourne, a position he held for nearly twenty years. After World War II, he began work on an ambitious monograph of the ants of Australia, in this supported by grants from the Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization. To date, a single volume of this project has seen print, covering the characteristically Australian bull-ants (subfamily Myrmeciinae), and it is not known at this writing whether further volumes will be released.

Aside from the forest insect notes and a couple of papers on myrmecophilous beetles, Clark published almost entirely on the taxonomy of Australian ants. The most significant result of his life work adds up to some twenty articles and monographs, all published in Australia. He described somewhat more than 200 new species of ants, but probably half of these will prove to be synonyms. Although he worked in all of the main Australian ant groups, his most extensive revisionary efforts dealt with the Cerapachyinae (especially *Phyracaces*), the Myrmeciinae, the genus *Rhytidoponera* and the Australian Dolichoderini.

Clark was greatly handicapped, both in earning his livelihood and in pursuing his research, by the sketchiness of his formal education. It is a pity that he never received early training commensurate with his intelligence and drive. He suffered a number of personal and family calamities that cut seriously into his time and opportunities for research, and finally led to his living more and more the life of a recluse during his declining years.

His most notable single achievement was the discovery of the remarkable *Nothomyrmecia macrops*, probably the most generalized member of the family Formicidae yet found, living or fossil. This ant, which he described from two worker specimens sent him from an unknown locality in southwestern Australia, has since been the much-publicized object of a half dozen expeditions to the empty sandplain and mallee country to the east of Esperance. All of these searchers, Australian, English and American, have so far been unsuccessful in finding any trace of *Nothomyrmecia*, but the ant has a fascination for formicid specialists that is comparable to the excitement aroused among students of vertebrate evolution by the discovery of the living coelacanth.

At the time I visited him in 1950, Clark had among his working collections several other undescribed Australian ants of a totally unexpected nature, and it is hoped that the CSIRO authorities will be able to recover these samples for future study. The bulk of the Clark types are in the National Museum of Victoria at Melbourne, and many of them are also deposited in the British Museum (Natural History) and in the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard. The type material of species described in his final monograph of the Myrmeciinae is deposited mostly in the collections of the Division of Entomology, CSIRO, Canberra, and it is assumed that this will be the place of deposit of the extensive collections he held at the time of his death, since many of the samples were the original property of the Division.

The entomological publications of John Clark for the earlier Australian period, 1921 through 1930, are listed by Musgrave

in his *Bibliography of Australian Entomology, 1775-1930*, published by the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales at Sydney, 1932 (pp. 48-49, 240). Clark's publications between 1930 and the time of his death, so far as known, are listed below.

1934. Notes on Australian ants, with descriptions of new species and a new genus. *Mem. Nat. Mus. Vict.*, Melbourne, 8: 5-20, Pl. 1, 1 text-fig.
1934. New Australian ants. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-47, Pls. 2, 3.
1934. Ants from the Otway Ranges. *Ibid.*, pp. 48-73, Pl. 4.
1936. A revision of the Australian species of *Rhytidoponera* Mayr (Formicidae). *Ibid.*, No. 9, pp. 14-89, Pls. 3-6, text-figs. 1-4.
1938. The Sir Joseph Banks Islands. Reports of the McCoy Society for Field Investigation and Research. Part I. Formicidae (Hymenoptera). *Proc. R. Soc. Victoria (n.s.)*, 50: 356-382, 20 figs.
1941. Australian Formicidae. Notes and new species. *Mem. Nat. Mus. Vict.*, Melbourne, 12: 71-94, Pl. 13.
1941. Notes on the Argentine ant and other exotic ants introduced into Australia. *Ibid.*, pp. 59-70, figs. 1-3.
1943. A revision of the genus *Promyrmecia* Emery (Formicidae). *Ibid.*, No. 13, pp. 83-149, Pls. 12-17, text-fig. 1.
1951. The Formicidae of Australia. Volume I. Subfamily Myrmeciinae. CSIRO, Melbourne. 230 pp., 193 figs.

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## A New Species of *Anastoechus* Osten Sacken with Notes on the Congeners

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The following description is given at this time in order to facilitate the return of borrowed material and to make the name available for future publications

The genus *Anastoechus* was described by Osten Sacken in 1877 with a single species, *barbatus*. Tucker in 1907 described